

Alvin Ailey, a Leading Figure In Modern Dance, Dies at 58

By JENNIFER DUNNING

Special to The New York Times

NEW YORK, Dec. 1 — Alvin Ailey, who rose from a childhood of poverty in the segregated world of small-town Texas to become a leading figure in the establishment of modern dance as a popular art form in America, died today at Lenox Hill Hospital after a long illness. He was 58 years old.

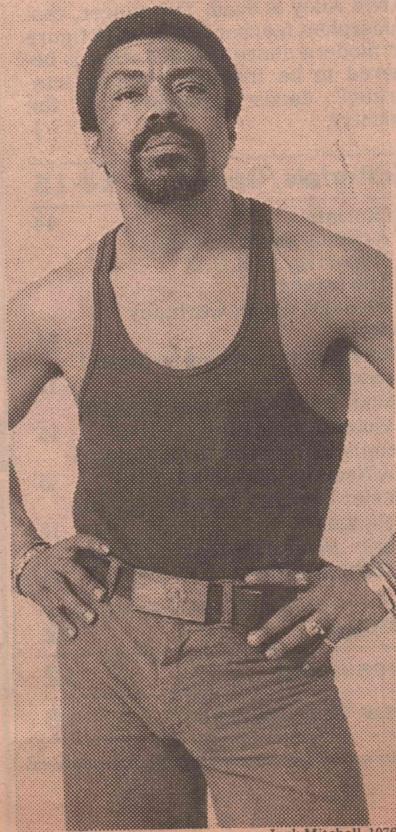
Dr. Albert Knapp, Mr. Ailey's physician, attributed the death to terminal blood dyscrasia, a rare disorder that affects the bone marrow and red blood cells.

As a choreographer, dancer and director, Mr. Ailey also played an important role in establishing black modern dance. He became a noted Broadway dancer and, starting in the late 1950's, a choreographer of work that explored a wide range of the black experience.

A Humanist Vision

The troupe he founded in 1958, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, became the most popular dance company on the international touring circuit. At home and abroad, the company was known for its vibrant artistry and repertory, and for Mr. Ailey's motivating humanist vision. The company opens a three-week season on Wednesday at City Center in New York.

Mr. Ailey saw his troupe as fulfilling the need for a repertory company that would perform modern-dance classics along with his own works. To that end he presented signature pieces, otherwise infrequently performed, by such pioneers as Katherine Dunham, Pearl Primus and Ted Shawn. The company served as a repository for contemporary modern dance by black choreog-



Jack Mitchell, 1976

Alvin Ailey

raphers like Talley Beatty, Donald McKayle and George Faison. And Mr. Ailey invited younger modernists, including Bill T. Jones and Arnie Zane, Elisa Monte and Ulysses Dove, to create dances for the company.

Mr. Ailey's own dances, however,

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DEC 5 1989 Service for Alvin Ailey

A memorial service for Alvin Ailey, founder and director of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, will be held on Friday at 10:30 A.M. at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, 112th Street and Amsterdam Avenue. Mr. Ailey died of a blood disorder last Friday at the age of 58.

Among those scheduled to take part are the drummer and composer Max Roach, the writer Maya Angelou, the singer Roberta Flack, Mayor-elect David N. Dinkins, and current and former members of the Ailey company. Information: 767-0590.

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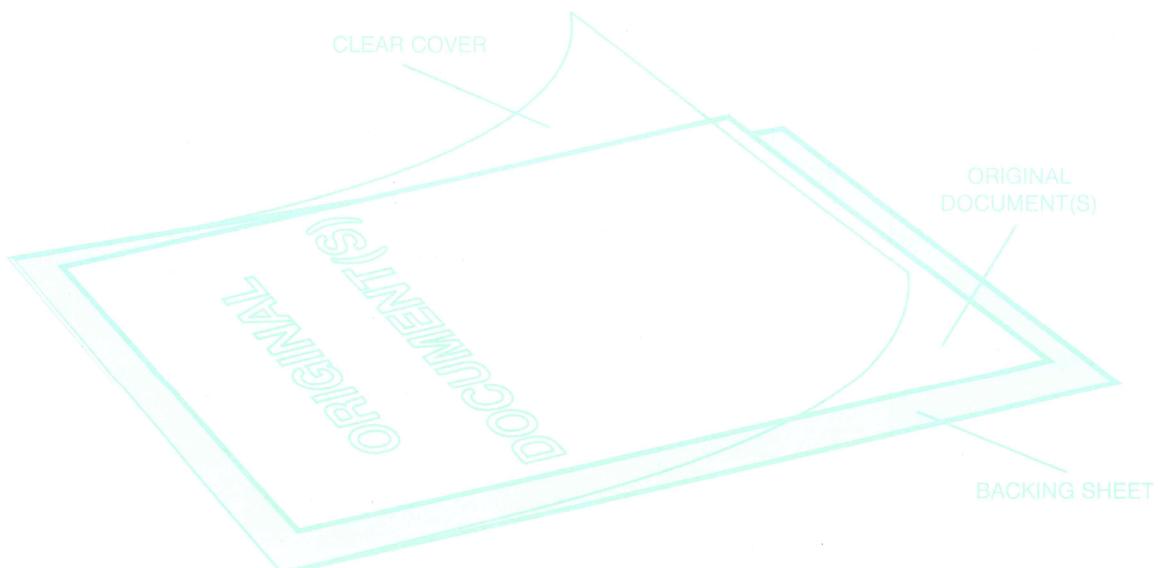
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Alvin Ailey, Choreographer, Dies at 58

Continued From Page 1

form the core of the company's repertory. They range from work drawn from his memories of the black churches and honky-tonk bars he knew as a child to searing social protest dances like his 1969 "Masekela Language" (a piece about being black in South Africa), to spirited, stylish celebrations of the music of Duke Ellington ("Night Creature," 1974).

An imposing, shy bear of a man, Mr. Ailey was capable of extreme reserve as well as sudden bursts of exuberance and deep affection for longtime colleagues. He spoke often of his belief in the universality of art, sometimes using his "Revelations" as an example. That 1960 work, which became his most popular piece and a classic of American modern dance, celebrated black spirituals, gospel music and small-town religion. "Its roots are in American Negro culture, which is part of the whole country's heritage," Mr. Ailey once said. "But the dance speaks to everyone. ... Otherwise it wouldn't work."

Mr. Ailey, who stopped dancing in 1965, drew upon classical ballet, jazz dance, Afro-Caribbean dance and the modern-dance idioms of Lester Horton and Martha Graham for his pieces. In an interview in 1971, he said: "We talk too much of black art when we should be talking about art, just art. Black composers must be free to write rondos and fugues, not only protest songs. I use Ellington and I want to use more of his music, but it's music."

Criticized for Theatricality

In the modern-dance world, once known for cultish audiences, he was sometimes criticized for the overt theatricality of the company's performances and repertory. "The black pieces we do that come from blues, spirituals and gospels are part of what I am," he said in a 1973 interview with Ellen Cohn in The New York Times Magazine. "They are as honest and truthful as we can make them. I'm interested in putting something on stage that will have a very wide appeal without being condescending; that will reach an audience and make it part of the dance; that will get everybody in the theater. What do people mean when they say we're 'Broadway'? If it's art and entertainment — *thank God, that's what I want to be.*"

The company was composed exclusively of black dancers until 1963, and Mr. Ailey was criticized in an era of black militancy for his subsequent decision to integrate his troupe. "I feel an obligation to use black dancers because there must be more opportunities for them, but not because I'm a black choreographer talking to black people," he said in the 1973 interview. But he added: "I met some incredible dancers of other colors who could cut the work. Also, we were running into reverse racism. On our Asian tour in

1962, people kept saying about my pieces and Talley Beatty's piece — 'Oh, they're wonderful, but only black people can do jazz.'"

"I don't think black dancers should be limited that way," he continued. "There's a well-known choreographer who says black people in 'Swan Lake' are historically inaccurate. Well, then white people and Orientals in 'Revelations' are historically inaccurate — but it works anyway. It's like saying only French people should do Racine or Molière. Black people are not historically inaccurate, but we have been historically ignored."

Mr. Ailey, the choreographer Eugene Loring once said, "fused black and white dance into a brilliant chiaroscuro."

A Lonely Childhood

Alvin Ailey was born on Jan. 5, 1931, in Rogers, Tex., a small town 50 miles south of Waco. His mother, Lula, was 17 when he was born; she was abandoned by her husband six months later. There was a deep attachment between Mr.

**'We talk too
much of black art
when we should
be talking about
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Ailey and his mother, who earned their livelihood by picking cotton and doing laundry and domestic work. Later she worked in an aircraft factory in Los Angeles.

As a lonely child in Navasota, Tex., where the two moved when Mr. Ailey was 6, he spent much time drawing insects, writing enigmatic poetry and playing the tuba. Religious services and social activities at the True Vine Baptist Church and the goings-on at the Dew Drop Inn, a dance hall and bar, made a deep impression on the child and served later as inspiration for several of Mr. Ailey's dances, including the 1958 "Blues Suite," his first choreographic success.

Mr. Ailey came into contact with dance gradually in Los Angeles, where

he and his mother moved when he was 12. An athletic student with a gift for foreign languages, Mr. Ailey did backyard imitations of Gene Kelly, but did not see a live dance performance until a junior high school class trip to a performance by the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. Though disappointed that "Scheherazade" seemed so tame, he began to haunt the city's theater section. "I first saw the Dunham company there," he recalled years later. "I went over one day and there were pictures of black dancers."

Fascinated by Miss Dunham's

"Tropical Revue," he was persuaded by a school friend to take dance classes with a member of the Dunham company. He was put off, however, by the tawdry atmosphere of the nightclub in which the class took place. Then he encountered the work of Lester Horton, an influential modern dance teacher and choreographer who was based in Los Angeles. Horton was known for taking inspiration from American Indian dance and Japanese theater, for his philosophy of total theater and for his racially integrated dance company, said to be the first in the nation.

'I Nearly Fainted'

Mr. Ailey said of his introduction to Horton's style: "One day a friend showed me some movements from a class he was taking, and I nearly fainted. I said, 'Oh, my God, what is that?' And he said, 'That's modern dancing.'"

Mr. Ailey began to study with Horton in 1949 and made his debut as a dancer with the company the following year. He left several times to study languages at the University of California at Los Angeles and other area colleges, but returned to the company in 1953 and found himself taking over as director when Horton died that year.

Mr. Ailey created his first three dances for the company. But in 1954 he and Carmen de Lavallade, also a Horton dancer, were invited to perform on Broadway as featured dancers in Truman Capote's "House of Flowers." The musical ran for only four months, but Mr. Ailey settled in New York to study modern dance with Martha Graham, Hanya Holm and Charles Weidman, ballet with Karel Shook and acting with Stella Adler and Milton Katselas.

He went on to appear in the 1954 film "Carmen Jones," acted in the 1955 Off Broadway production "The Carefree Tree," and returned to Broadway in 1957 in the musical "Jamaica." He directed the revue "African Holiday" in 1960 and co-directed "Jerico-Jim Crow," a song-play by Langston Hughes, Off Broadway in 1964. There were other acting roles, in "Call Me by My Rightful Name" in 1961 and on Broadway in "Tiger, Tiger, Burning Bright" in 1962. His choreography over the next few years included dance for Samuel Barber's opera "Antony and Cleopatra," which was the first Metropolitan Opera production at Lincoln Center, and for Leonard Bernstein's "Mass" for the opening of the Ken-

nedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington.

The Start of a Company

But it was an earlier concert, in March 1958 at the 92d Street Y in New York, that crystallized his future. In a performance shared with Ernest Parham, Mr. Ailey and six other dancers presented three works, including "Blues Suite." Three months later, John Martin, dance critic of The Times, singled out Mr. Ailey as one of the six



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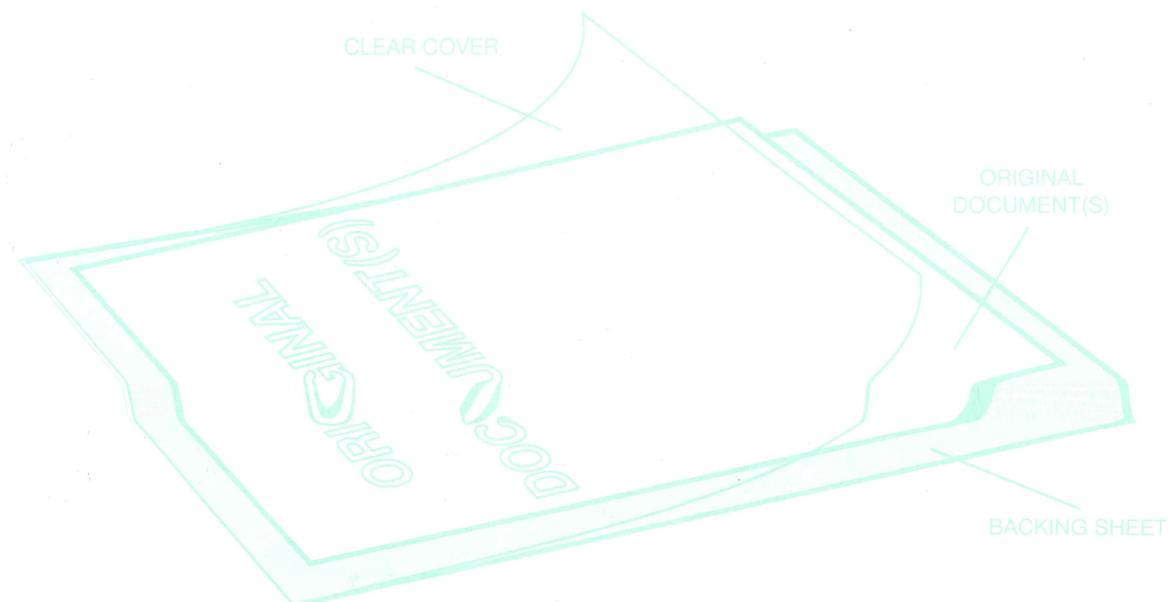
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Zachary Freyman

Alvin Ailey performing at the 92d Street Y in 1960.

standing artists that season. "As a former he has a rich, animal quality movement and an innate sense of dramatic projection, which have been shown before; but as a choreographer had not previously shown his work before. It was an impressive debut."

Mr. Martin described "Blues Suite" as "inherently substantial stuff." He wrote: "It is overflowing with variety; it is beautifully staged, with excellent music and costumes by Geoffrey Holder, and on this occasion was superbly danced. An admirable piece of work all around."

The concert was the start of Mr. Ailey's company. Four years later the State Department sent the Ailey dance troupe to Australia and Southeast Asia on the first of many immensely successful foreign tours. Domestic successes were few, however, until a 1969 engagement on Broadway at the Billy Rose Theater.

Later that year, the Ailey troupe became a resident company at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, a relationship that lasted three seasons. Bookings were still slow, though the company did tour the Soviet Union the following year at the invitation of the State Department, the first American modern-dance troupe to do so since Isadora Duncan's group in the 1920's. Suddenly,

'Oh, my God, what is that?' 'That's modern dancing.'

Mr. Ailey announced the dissolution of the troupe, and the State Department stepped in to save the company with an additional tour of North Africa.

A successful two-week season at the ANTA Theater in New York early in 1971 helped to establish the troupe as a major company. That year, Mr. Ailey founded the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center, the company's bustling official school and the home of the Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble, a junior troupe. In 1972, the company joined the City Center of Music and Drama. The school and companies have just moved into new headquarters near Lincoln Center.

Today, the 28-member company has an annual season at City Center and a 35-week national and international touring season. It has performed in 45 countries on 6 continents. Mr. Ailey's choreography, including commissioned premieres, has also been per-

formed by the American Ballet Theater, the Joffrey Ballet, the Paris Opera Ballet, the London Festival Ballet, the Royal Danish Ballet and companies in Italy, Venezuela and Israel.

In 1988, Mr. Ailey was awarded the Kennedy Center Honors from President Reagan, and received New York City's Handel Medallion for achievement in the arts. His dance honors included the 1987 Samuel H. Scripps American Dance Festival Award, the 1979 Capezio Award and the 1975 Dance Magazine Award. He received honorary doctorates from Princeton University, Bard College and Adelphi University, and in 1976 he was awarded the Spingarn Medal of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Success was not achieved easily. Mr. Ailey suffered a breakdown in 1980, and was hospitalized after a number of public outbursts. Judith Jamison, the Ailey star for whom the choreographer created "Cry," another signature piece, in 1971, once said: "Alvin needs to really believe that he has done great things, that he — more than anyone else — has done great things for black dance in America."

Mr. Ailey is survived by his mother, Lula Cooper; his stepfather, Frederick W. Cooper, and his half-brother, Calvin Walls, all of Los Angeles.



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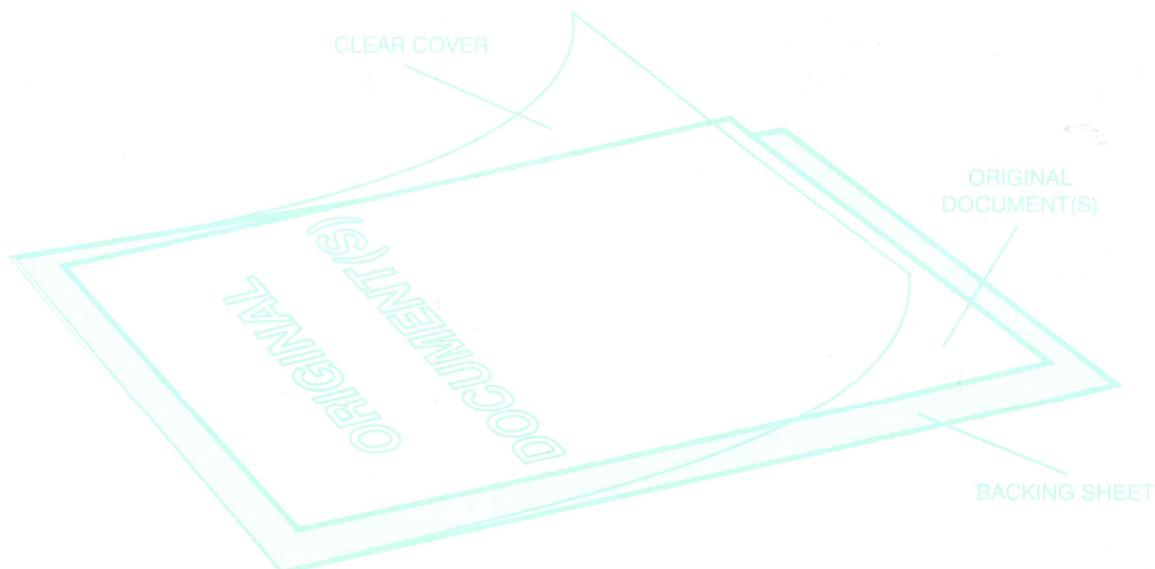
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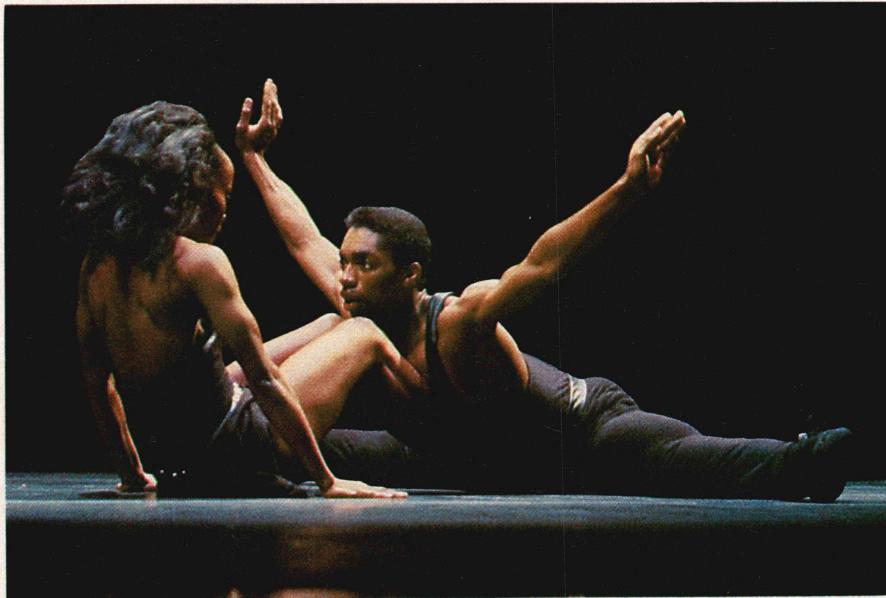
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Dance/Tobi Tobias

MOVING ON

“...One can read in the Ailey repertory much that went into the forming of his complex nature as artist and human being. . .”



URBAN PLIGHT: Renee Robinson, Desmond Richardson in the Ailey troupe's *Episodes*.

FIVE DAYS BEFORE THE Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater opened its customary monthlong season at the City Center, Ailey died at the age of 58. What sort of compressed life story can be told about an expansive achiever like Ailey—dancer, choreographer, leader of a major company and school—in such modest space as this? Actually, a great deal of his experience as an individual and as a representative of the black race is related in the dances he choreographed and in the dances by others that he commissioned or acquired for his company.

To give the simplest example, Ailey's own early masterworks, the 1958 *Blues Suite* (to music by Ellington, a composer who would continue to spur Ailey's imagination) and the 1960 *Revelations* (the company's signature piece), synthesize, in turn, the action at the low-down bar-cum-dance hall and the vivid rites of repentance and salvation at the local Baptist church of Ailey's youth in a small-town black community in Texas. Some of his later ballets about jazz musicians—less effective as choreography, alas—dwell on the issue of the creation, by a damaged psyche, of art that soars; it would be presumptuous to make a biographical equation here, but it is surely fair to say that Ailey, whose troubles at times over-

whelmed him, saw his subjects in some measure as kindred souls.

One can read in the Ailey repertory as a whole—which ranges from early modern-dance explorations through postmodernism, takes side trips into ethnology, and incorporates more than a touch of showbiz theatricality—much that went into the forming of Ailey's complex nature as an artist and as a human being. The works Ailey created and collected reflect his beginnings in modern dance with the pioneering Lester Horton, his own performing on Broadway, and his determination to bring black artists and their concerns into the mainstream of a Eurocentric culture. They also display his sense of connection—the universal cousinship felt by members of a beleaguered minority—to aspects of the black experience that were “his” only indirectly: America's early exploitation of blacks, the traumas of contemporary South Africa, the music and dance of the Caribbean and the inextricable relation of those arts to the region's religious traditions.

These social and historical factors became Ailey's territory, as did a particular emotional heritage: anger and conflict, based on deprivations and injustices he had known since childhood, and which professional success could never quite

mitigate, as well as an acute sensitivity to joy—the worldly pleasure that lightens our daily struggle and the enduring sort we admit is fantasy and yearn for nonetheless. And so an evening with the company that Ailey struggled to establish and maintain constantly bore witness to the fact that life is both tough beyond endurance and sweeter than mother's milk, that the soul's aspirations are so ecstatic as to be unquenchable. This message is no more double-tongued than the memorial celebration the company offered on its opening night, in which the dancing, to a greater extent than any public display I've seen, wove together grief, defiance of death, and celebration of a particular life and of life itself.

The accessibility of the Ailey repertory—where the importance or attractiveness of subject matter has sometimes outweighed dance values—has brought the company a wide audience and, at the same time, the scorn of viewers whose satisfaction in dance centers on formalist concerns. Yet even the purists could be seduced, more than occasionally, by the troupe's performers. For a quarter-century, their pride, elegance, and lavish gift for self-display—both innate and highly cultivated—have been well nigh irresistible. The range of star material the roster has continually boasted is epitomized by the presence of the veteran Dudley Williams, a dancer of the utmost delicacy and understatement, alongside a relevant newcomer, Desmond Richardson, a paradigm of immediacy, clarity, and force. One of the company's most compelling female artists, Judith Jamison, has been named the troupe's new artistic director.

It is anticlimactic and somewhat irrelevant to talk about the new works of the season; as with any company in any season, few are destined for immortality. Ulysses Dove's *Episodes* at least means something to its present audience. It takes the pulse of today's young urban society: desperately yearning for connection and enraged to the point of violence by the very partners who might provide it. The choreography, crafted in stunning poster-art style, rejects the ambiguities that could give it depth, opting rather for a relentlessly vicious athleticism to which the more abandoned viewers respond with roars of excitement and recognition. ■

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By Corky Pollan

A Rare Read

Don't ask Bibi Mohamed for the latest best-seller—most of her books are at least 50 years old. But do ask her about rare and out-of-print books, signed first editions, illustrated volumes, and leather-bound sets. For thirteen years, Mohamed was associ-



ated with one of the city's most prestigious fine-book galleries; now, in her snug, second-story shop, new and seasoned collectors can benefit from her years of experience. Mohamed's literary wares include history, sociology, psychology, poetry, fiction, and illustrated children's books, and in addition to her printed treasures, she offers book-binding, restoration, and cleaning services. (From \$35 to \$175 for a single volume; \$350 to \$3,500 for a leather-bound set.)

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These Tea Kings

A cozy country tea on the Lower East Side? Aye. Danal is like the tearooms that dot the lush countrysides of the UK, though it's not run by a dear little white-haired lady. Owners Dan Saltiel and Albert Volk (so young, so energetic) spent time in Europe in search of the ideal tea, and have created a magical hideaway for breakfast (8 A.M. till noon), lunch (noon till 3 P.M.), and, above all, a chatty tea (4 P.M. to 6:30). Be seated on the velvet sofas by the "fire" or at the long common table and admire the clutter of antique Quimper plates (not for sale), the copper pots, linens, and tea china (all for sale), and light into a loverly tea. A prix fixe of \$12 per person gives you a choice of 45 different teas served in a brown-betty teapot, three large sandwiches (mine were cucumber on pain de mie), two warm scones, a scoop of Devon cream, some strawberry preserve, and two slices of fresh-baked tart or tea cake, all served on Staffordshire china—so how can you resist? As the English say, "Thank God for tea."

—Barbara Costikyan

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Luggage Knack

If you had a Christmas like ours, chances are you're in need of a bit of rest and relaxation. For trips to sunnier climes, nothing could be better than Matsuda's handsome embossed-cowhide luggage. It was once sold only in Matsuda's Tokyo stores, but now everything from soft overnights to

hard-case two-suiters is available here (also in light brown and black), so New Yorkers, too, can travel in high style (\$430 to \$1,880; sheepskin gloves, \$270). MATSUDA/156 Fifth Avenue, near 20th Street/645-5151, and 461 Park Avenue, at 57th Street/935-6969



MORNING REPORT

Arts and entertainment reports from The Times, national and international news services and the nation's press.

DANCE

Ailey Recalled: Dancer-choreographer Alvin Ailey was remembered for his innovations and artistic passion as a modern dance pioneer Tuesday night by about 100 friends and relatives during a 1½-hour funeral service at the First Baptist Church of Artesia. The modest ceremony followed a memorial in New York last Friday attended by 5,000. Mourners included Jasmine Guy, co-star of NBC's "A Different World," who sang the hymn "His Eye Is on the Sparrow." "He believed that dance could and should reach everyone. Not through the eyes, ears and intellect alone but through the heart and gut as well," wrote Jennifer Dunning in the memorial notes. Ailey, 58, died Dec. 1 of a blood disorder. He was buried Wednesday morning at Rose Hills Memorial Park in Whittier. The Associated Press said there were reports that Ailey had been treated for complications related to acquired immune deficiency syndrome during the last year.



Ailey

TV & VIDEO

Broadcast News: The BBC will teach Polish broadcasters Western radio and television techniques as part of Britain's \$80-million aid package, it was announced Wednesday. Thirty-six broadcasters, chosen by Polish Radio and Television, will begin six-week training programs starting in February. The fund was authorized by Parliament in June after Polish leader Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski's visit to Britain.

David and Maddie Get a New Life: "Moonlighting" can light up viewers' lives once again now that the series has been acquired by the Lifetime cable network. The series, which made a star out of Bruce Willis and re-established Cybill Shepherd's career, will begin with the pilot episode on Feb. 5 and be seen Monday through Thursday at 8 p.m. and Saturdays at 9 p.m.

POP/ROCK

Get Him Off the Road: Bass guitarist John Taylor of the British rock group Duran Duran was banned from driving for 12 months and fined the equivalent of \$400 Wednesday after he admitted drinking while driving. Prosecutor Debbie Churaman told Horseferry Magistrates Court that Taylor was stopped on his way home early Tuesday by police who saw him speeding and driving erratically through London. Taylor's lawyer, Nicholas Price, said the 29-year-old musician had worked until midnight Monday and had eaten nothing except a sandwich before driving to a party. "I have been very irresponsible," Taylor, 29, said after the court appearance. "It's no use blaming anybody else. You know what you are doing, and that's it. It was down to me." Duran Duran, an English pop group that attracted a large teen following with hits as "Hungry Like the Wolf" and "A View to a Kill," was a early MTV favorite.



Taylor

Stage W

By SYLVIE DRAKE
TIMES THEATER WRITER

When August Wilson's "The Piano Lesson" comes to the Ahmanson Jan. 18, it will bring with it kind of lesson—in potential ways of financing show-ailing Broadway.

The Center Theatre Ahmanson, which has booked original Yale Repertory production of "Lesson" for a week run, will be a co-producer of the show on Broadway with Rep and Jujamcyn Theaters.

In an arrangement unprecedented for CTG, it will guarantee all costs for the show's run at Doolittle, plus \$300,000 in toward the Broadway run.

In return, Yale and Center Ahmanson will each have \$150,000 interest in the production. Jujamcyn is putting up the theater (the Walter Kerr, formerly the Ritz), plus \$100,000 in cash and another \$100,000 in a reserve fund.

"What we're trying to do," explained Mark Taper Forum





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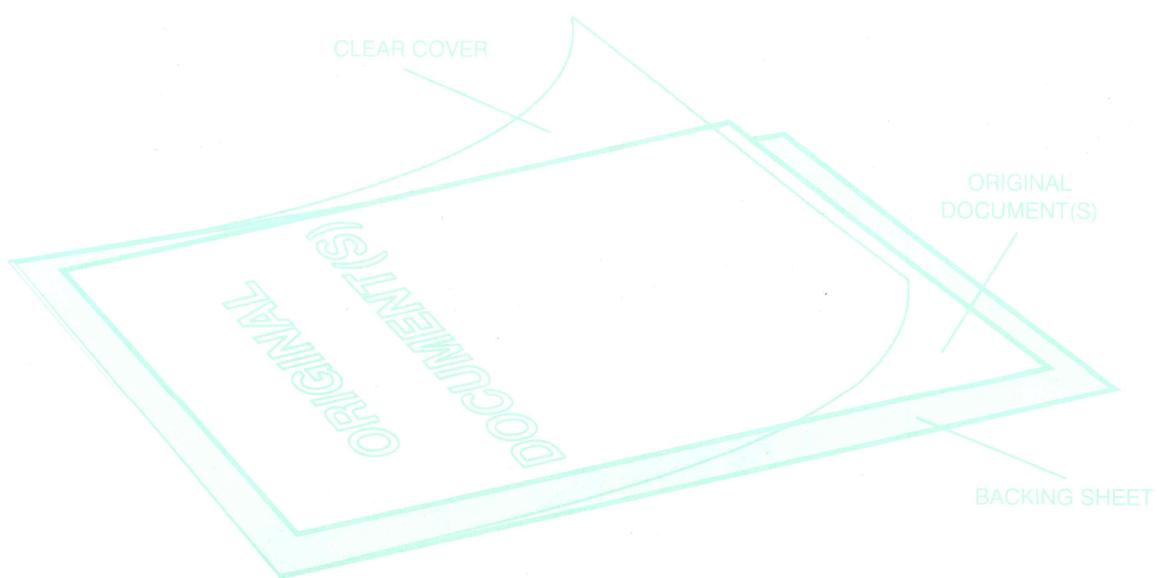
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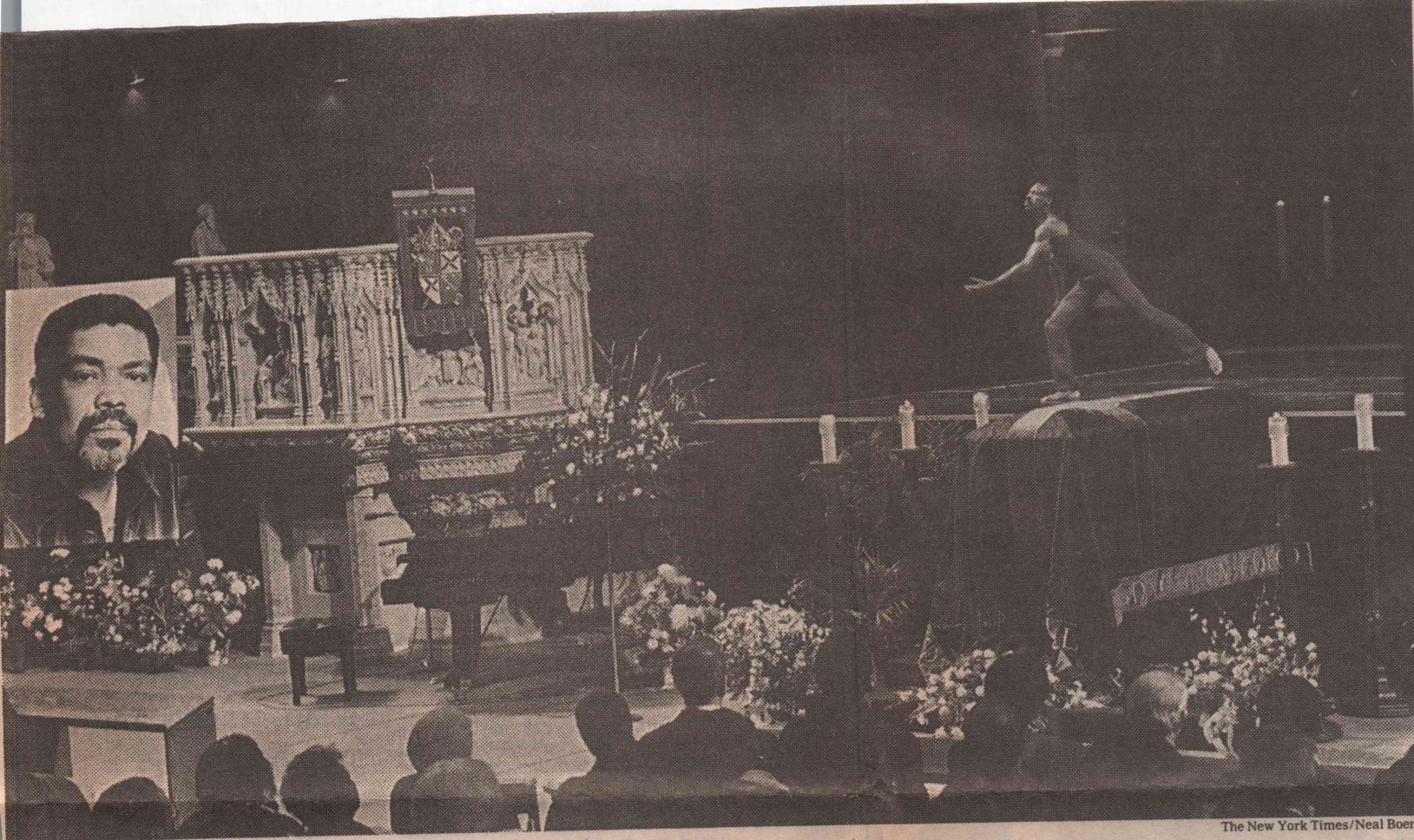
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The New York Times/Neal Boenzi

Dancers performed "A Song For You" at a memorial service for Alvin Ailey yesterday at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

4,500 People Attend Ailey Memorial Service at St. John the Divine

By JENNIFER DUNNING

There were tears and laughter, public praise and personal anecdote as some 4,500 people commemorated Alvin Ailey yesterday in "The Celebration of Alvin Ailey Jr., Going Home," a memorial and funeral service at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. The modern-dance choreographer and founder and director of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater died of a blood disorder on Dec. 1 at the age of 58. He will be buried in Los Angeles.

"Alvin really stuck to what he wanted to do," said Louise Roberts, a longtime Ailey friend and colleague. "He stuck to having a company and that was hard. He made a joyous experience available to millions of people."

ple."

Guillermo Asca and Jody Foster, two students at the Ailey school, talked of Mr. Ailey's generosity to young dancers and of his interest in their careers.

"If you worked with him, he touched you," Jim Csollany said as he and 29 other members of the stage crew at the City Center, where the Ailey company is performing through Dec. 31, took their seats before the service.

President Bush's Message

Then Mr. Ailey's family, friends and colleagues, led by his mother, Lula Cooper, and his brother, David Walls Cooper, filed to the front of the cathedral behind the coffin, to the stately, lilting beat of drums played by Max Roach. In a statement read by Stanley

'He made a joyous experience available to millions of people.'

Plesent, the former head of the company's board, President Bush eulogized Mr. Ailey as "a man of gentleness and vision." And Mayor-elect David N. Dinkins described the choreographer as a humanist who served as a "great interpreter and apostle of American culture for the rest of the world."

Some of the most moving reminiscences in the two-hour service were from Carmen de Lavallade, Mr. Ailey's first partner, and Judith Jamison, former star of the Ailey troupe. Miss de Lavallade talked of Mr. Ailey's earliest years in dance and of his dance legacy. "He gave you an open chest of gems, of jewels," she said, addressing the young dancers in the audience. "And all you have to do is dip in your hand and take it and use it and pass it on."

Miss Jamison said: "He gave me legs until I could stand on my own as a dancer and a choreographer. He made us believe we could fly."

Joy in Touring Recalled

The writer Maya Angelou read a poem for Mr. Ailey, and Paul Szilard, his manager, recalled Mr. Ailey's delight in the company's many international tours. The Rev. Dr. Robert Polk, who officiated at the ceremony with the Very Rev. James Parks Morton, dean of the cathedral, and Canon James A. Gibson, talked of hearing Mr. Ailey plan a European tour when the company "couldn't afford to get to J.F.K."

There was music from Ashford and Simpson. Dudley Williams danced Mr. Ailey's "Song for You." An excerpt from his "Cry" was performed by Donna Wood, and excerpts from "Revelations," a modern-dance classic by Mr. Ailey, were danced by Mio Kajiwara, John Parks and the company.

As the dancers moved to the beat of the spiritual "Rocka My Soul," which the finale of "Revelations" performed, Mr. Ailey's mother, a

May McClintock, 84,

Stuart Novins Is Dead;

Israel Untermaier
Professor, 68

a professor of
Diego State Univer-
sity, from congestive
heart failure in La Jolla,

in Gdansk,

Poland, when he

was 60.

to attend

earned a

at Har-
vard

in La Jolla



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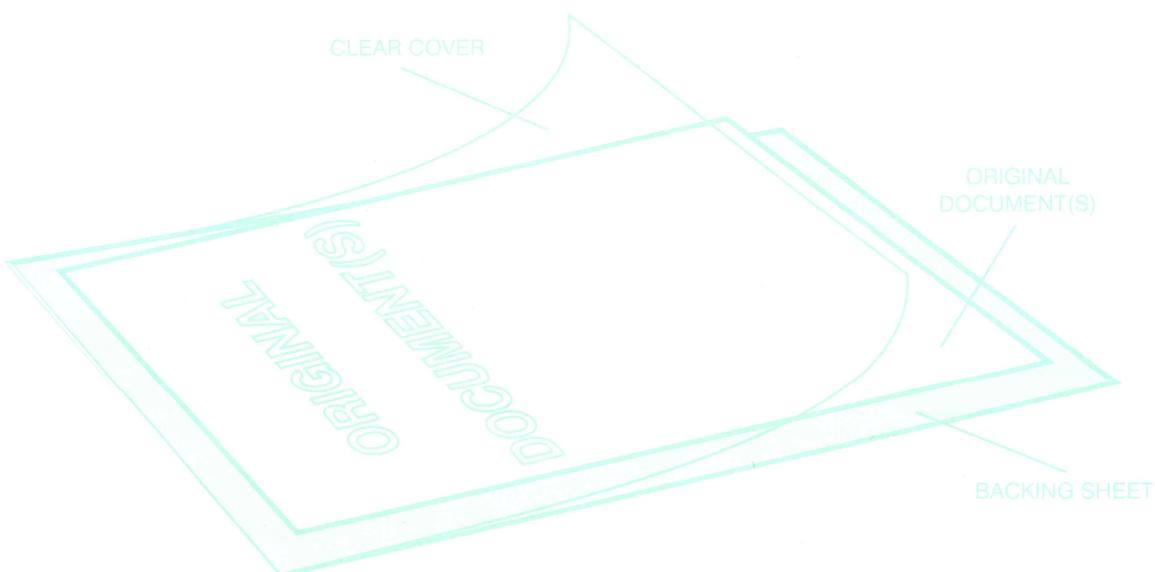
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Reorder Number 099DC

Ailey Accused of Neglecting Professorship

By JENNIFER DUNNING

A spokesman for Alvin Ailey, founder and director of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, has denied charges made in The New York Post yesterday by some school officials and students that he had not appeared at many of the classes he was hired to teach at the Borough of Manhattan Community College. Mr. Ailey resigned his \$80,000-a-year post as a distinguished professor on Aug. 31.

The spokesman, William Hammond, executive director of the Ailey company, said yesterday that Mr. Ailey had served primarily as a consultant. The choreographer released

a letter of resignation written to Mayer Rossabi, chairman of the physical education department at the college. The letter, written by a representative of Mr. Ailey's manager on Sept. 27, cites an original agreement giving Mr. Ailey "project responsibilities and consulting functions but no teaching hours."

"Your letter of June 14 specified 15 to 18 weekly hours at the College," the letter continued, "which is a new condition that he cannot fulfill."

Mr. Ailey had been associated with the college since September 1985, a spokesman for the college said yesterday, helping to design curriculum for a new dance major and a high-school dance program and to design and equip the college's new dance studio. He also served as co-producer

and moderator for a video series called "Conversations in Black Dance" in 1987.

"He brought in instructors from the Ailey company, and from time to time visited and critiqued the classes," the college spokesman said of the high school program, adding that he did not know if the classes had been described to students as a course with Mr. Ailey. "We believe that Mr. Ailey has conscientiously performed all the responsibilities assigned to him in the course of his employment," the spokesman said.

Mr. Ailey took a partial leave of absence from his company in February, citing a need to rest after a strenuous 30th-anniversary season and extended European projects.

(07/12/89)

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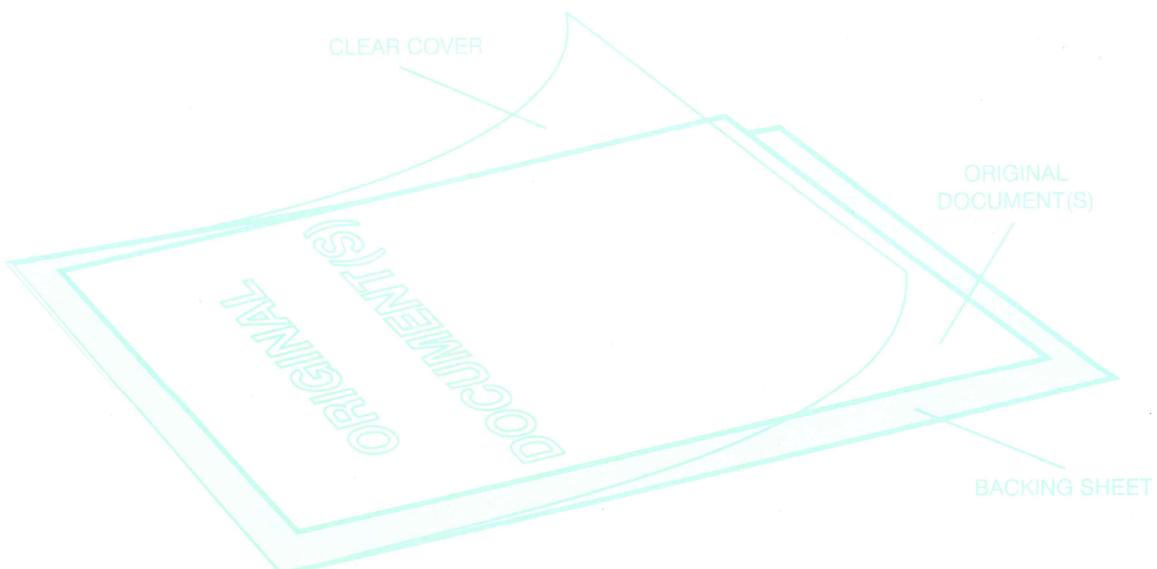
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Reorder Number 099DC

Dance: All-Ailey Program by Alvin Ailey Troupe

By JACK ANDERSON

Although the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater has a varied repertoire, it occasionally devotes programs entirely to works by Alvin Ailey, its director. What made Thursday night's all-Ailey program unusual was the fact that Mr. Ailey served as commentator. It was one of several special events that the company is offering this season at the City Center, 131 West 55th Street.

Mr. Ailey reminisced about growing up in Los Angeles: about how a school excursion to the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo made him a dance lover and about how, when he saw Katherine Dunham's black dance troupe, he vowed that he, too, would

be a dancer. He went on to discuss the works on the program.

"Night Creature," he explained, grew out of his love for Duke Ellington's music. He added that he intended the women in the cast to be dominant. Which they were in this performance, with the ensemble portraying people seeking a pleasant night on the town. Marilyn Banks, their alluring leader, danced first with Rodney Nugent, then with Kevin Brown. She obviously could have danced all night.

"Love Songs," said Mr. Ailey, was created for Dudley Williams, a member of the company since 1964. He performed it once again and it was still eloquent. Much of this solo consists of

steps back and forth along a diagonal. The varying levels of intensity that Mr. Williams brought to these passages made them resemble surges of feeling.

In "Memoria," a tribute to Joyce Trisler, a choreographer who died in 1979, Mr. Ailey said he sought to create "images of love and loss, regret, falling apart and ascending." All these images grew clear in a performance headed by April Berry, Gary DeLoatch and Mr. Nugent, with the ensemble augmented by dancers from the Ailey second company and school.

Finally, there was "Revelations," Mr. Ailey's wonderful work to spirituals. The choreographer said that it was intended to be part of a cycle of

dances about black Southern culture. But he also wished the costumes the first section to suggest the volume of sculptures by Henry Moore. This section was danced with dignity, with Michihiiko Oka and Renee Robins as notable soloists. The ensuing baptismal ceremony had appropriate fervor. Carl Bailey, David Charles, Daniel Clark and Jonathan Riseling were passionate in scenes songs emphasizing God's judgment. And "Revelations" concluded with a rousing evocation of a church service.

The only sour note in a jubilant evening was sounded when Mr. Ailey announced that, because of an injured dancer, the company could not offer as scheduled, a repeat performance of his new "For Bird — With Love."

Dance: Riverside Celebrates Ailey's Anniversary

9/13/84

By ANNA KISSELGOFF

The Riverside Dance Festival, an indisputable mainstay of New York's dance scene, opened its new season Tuesday night with a festive gala celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble.

The founding father, Mr. Ailey himself, was among the speakers at the Theater of the Riverside Church on a program that included the world premiere of a dance treatment by Donald McKayle of Eugene O'Neill's "Emperor Jones" and a guest appearance by Judith Jamison.

Sylvia Waters, the ensemble's artistic director, was introduced by David K. Manion, the festival's direc-

tor and praised by Mr. Ailey, who also gave some insight into one of his finest works, "Blues Suite," which was on the program. "Blues Suite" (1958) was drawn from "blood memories in the little town in Texas where I lived until I was 12," he said. It was designed to be "tight like a knot," expressing "a lot of anger."

The ensemble's dancers, in fact, gave "Blues Suite" a taut performance. Only Keith McDaniel and Renée Robinson, guests from the senior company, seemed too light in movement quality in the "Backwater Blues" duet but they caught the humor that exists in the piece along with despair.

Talley Beatty's "Congo Tango Pal-

ace," another Ailey company staple, was explosively danced with Norman Kauahi, recently with the senior troupe, leading a smoldering ensemble. As Spanish as the choreography's flavor seems, it is not Spain but the big-city tensions of America's Hispanic ghettos that Mr. Beatty captured so brilliantly in 1960 here.

Miss Jamison, always a star, turned Marlene Furtick's despairing solo, "How Long Have It Been" into a persuasive statement of human yearning while Charles Epps bravely tried the same in a solo by Gary Ellis Frazier that was too classroom in tone. Valerie Simpson's recording "Baby Child Born" provided the music.

The program opened with the third

section of Fred Benjamin's attractive jazz-ballet "Icefire," danced with spitfire energy by the ensemble.

In "Never, a dance abstraction of "The Emperor Jones," Mr. McKayle has transposed the hallucinating tyrant's decline to Haiti. His inner demons are voodoo spirits — Never is a word for symbols invoking voodoo spirits.

If somewhat long, "Never" is nonetheless fast paced. The outline of the play is there — the former dictator graphically sees himself on the slave block — but he is done in here less by his own people in revolt than by the spirits who visit him. Some do so wonderfully anthropomorphic for — the crocodile played by several dancers is a case in point. Michael Joy was all commitment and feeling as Jones, with Loris Anthony Beckles and Desirée Sewer as the priests, and the spirits personified by Patricia Jacobs and Ray Tadio. Using music by Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson, Mr. McKayle has created some vibrant theatrical imagery. The ensemble, alternating several programs, will perform through Sunday.

Bridge:

Partner of Opening Leader
Must Follow Right Formula

By ALAN TRUSCOTT

naturally landed in six hearts rather than the easy contract of six diamonds. The king was led, and the queen was cashed. She was

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♦ A K J 9 8 4
♣ A Q J

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EAST

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SOUTH

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♦ 10 2

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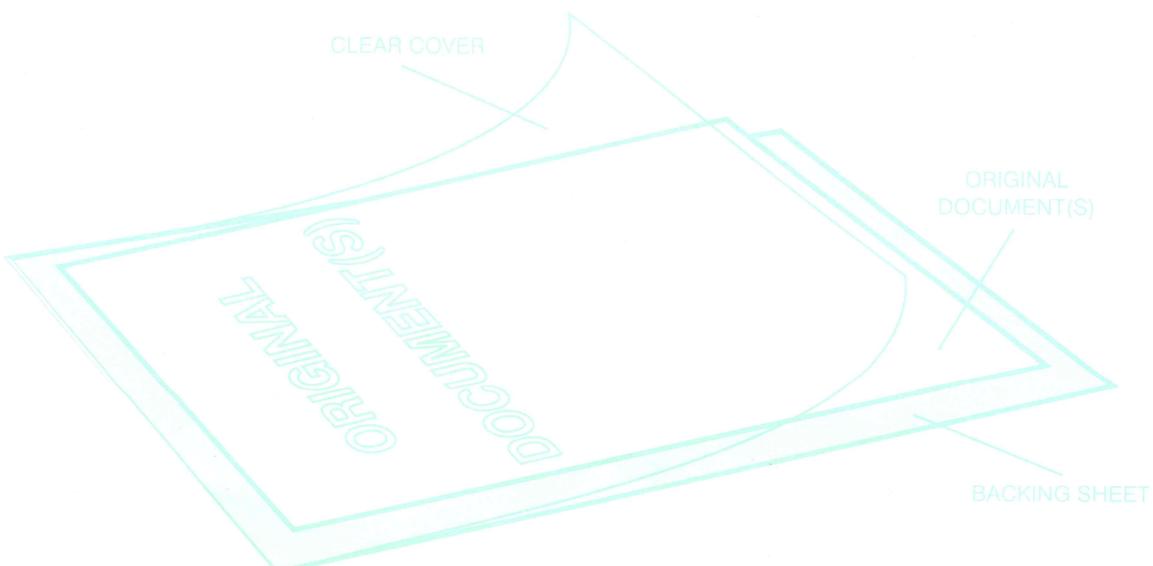
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Reorder Number 099DC

Dance: Ailey Tribute To Charlie Parker

By ANNA KISSELGOFF

Alvin Ailey's long-awaited tribute to the late jazz great Charlie Parker, "For Bird—With Love," had its New York premiere at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's gala opening Wednesday night. It was worth the wait.

Like all Ailey galas (this one had a gracious curtain speech by Lena Horne, an eloquent homage to Parker by Max Roach and praise from R. William Murray, president of Philip Morris, which is providing the funds for the Ailey tours), the newest benefit—designed to open a company season at the City Center at 131 West 55th Street—had a family feeling.

The Ailey company has conserved the communal commitment once common to all American modern-dance and ballet troupes simply because Mr. Ailey himself still has a missionary zeal. He knows what he wants to say in dance, and it is anything but an empty message. In his own curtain speech, he even said it in words—namely that the preservation of "the modern-dance tradition" and "the black tradition" in American dance pioneered by the dancer-choreographers Asadata Dafara, Katherine Dunham and Pearl Primus were the goals of his company's repertory and of his school.

A tribute to Charlie Parker, the now-legendary alto-saxophonist known familiarly as Bird and after whom the jazz club, Birdland, was named, "For Bird" falls well within the Ailey guidelines. The humanism that characterizes Mr. Ailey's own choreography cannot be divorced from the struggle of the black performing artist in America in the past and it cannot be conveyed without the music and dance idioms that lie at the source of the black heritage celebrated in Mr. Ailey's deepest works.

And so if it has to be said that "For Bird—With Love" is not an unflawed work, it is also true that it carries a certain greatness within it. At its core, it offers a brilliant example of dance characterization. It has a fabulous center, a jazz club scene—a composite of Birdland and all the other clubs where Parker did his jamming—that offers the most brilliant

The Program

FOR BIRD — WITH LOVE (New York premiere), choreography, Alvin Ailey; music, Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Count Basie, Jerome Kern; original music composed, assembled and conducted by Coleridge Taylor-Perkinson; set and costume design, Randy Barcelo; lighting, Timothy Hunter. Presented by the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater at the City Center 55th Street Theater.

examples of character dancing to be seen anywhere.

Character dancing is a lost art, and Mr. Ailey is obviously threatening to revive it. Each figure in this scene is sketched out and analyzed with depth and even occasional humor: The four women, generically symbolizing Parker's several wives, who fight over him, and the musicians in his quintet whose bodies arch and bend, vibrate or reverberate with the simulated effort of blowing a visible trumpet or beating an invisible drum. The dancing is not classical; it is in the realm of character dancing in the sense that Serge Diaghilev's choreographers in the Ballets Russes understood it. There is a codifying and absorbing of the vernacular. Mr. Ailey has taken street and jazz dance idioms—even just the way musicians move when they play an instrument—and made it all flow.

This is terrific choreography and there are fabulous performances—beginning with Gary DeLoatch as the tortured Parker figure, broken-lined and quick in his footwork, gestures and a fevered body. There are fabulous costumes, by Randy Barcelo, who also thought up the tersely communicative sets (one is a street photo of Birdland and other marques). And when there are no sets, there is Timothy Hunter's dramatic lighting to create a sense of place—or in the asylum scene when the hero has a mental breakdown, a sense of no place.

Most important, there is the music, stitched together in a continuous ballet score by an eminent musician himself, Coleridge Taylor-Perkinson. He has, of course incorporated Parker's own compositions and the tape heard in the theater uses a Billie Holli-



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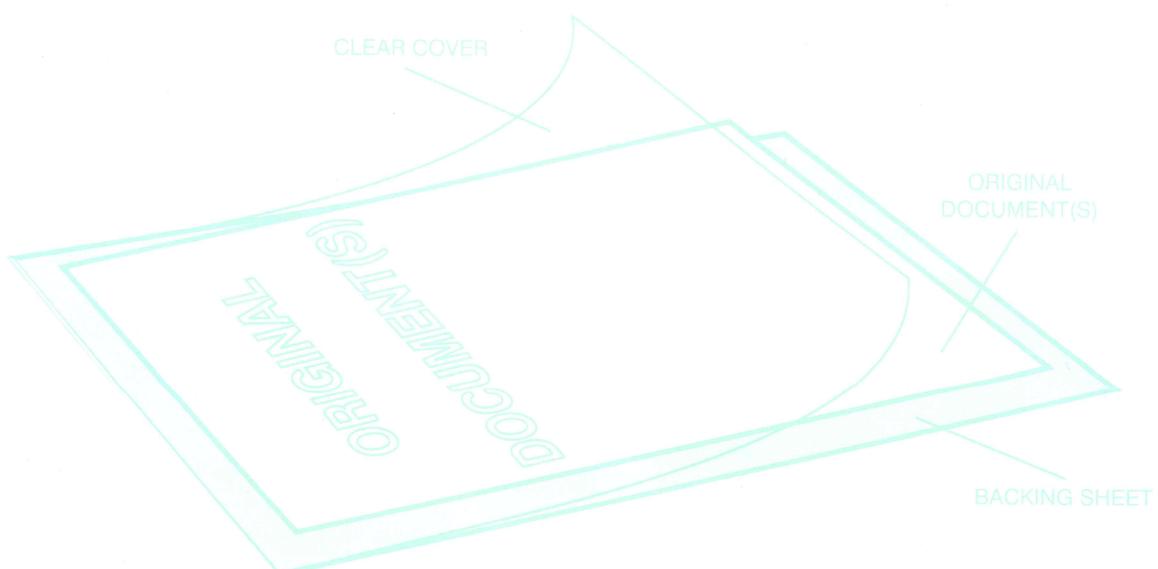
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The New York Times/Ruby Washington

Gary DeLoatch in the role of Charlie Parker in the premiere of "For Bird — With Love," at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

day recording — but most of the music is original, written for the choreography and in keeping with the era portrayed.

Parker, who died in 1955 at the age of 35, was born in Kansas City, Mo., and it is relevant to point out that Mr. Ailey created this work in 1984 in Kansas City as a commission, with city sponsorship, from the Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey, the Black Community Fund of Greater Kansas City and others. When Mr. DeLoatch was injured last year, the New York premiere was postponed until this season.

"For Bird — With Love" is not without some tried and true formulas. Dudley Williams, an always strong stage presence, cannot do much with the role of a man in many guises who conjures up the Parker figure, identified as "Bird, a man, a musician." There is also a rather pat apotheosis familiar from works such as Mr. Ailey's "Memoria." After a startling moment in which Mr. DeLoatch lunges toward us in a straitjacket with extra-long sleeves

of stretch fabric held back by others — and then dies — the ensemble in red swirls around him. The musician's music lives.

The performances, as noted, are exceptional — with Carl Bailey's trumpeter especially outstanding, backed up by Jonathan Riseling, Kevin Brown, Ralph Glenmore and Daniel Clark as the other musicians. April Berry and Patricia Dingle are hilarious as two statuesque and risqué showgirls with towering feathered headresses. Marilyn Banks, Barbara Pounce, Niesha Folkes and Deborah Chase are energetically furious as the women in the hero's life.

The opening work was the company premiere of Jennifer Muller's "Speeds," which does little for the choreographer or the dancers. Miss Muller's own company uses a shift of weight and curved flinging style that the Ailey dancers do not find natural. As a result the dancing, based at times on contrasts in speeds for 11 performers in white (to Burt Alcantara's score), looked bland.

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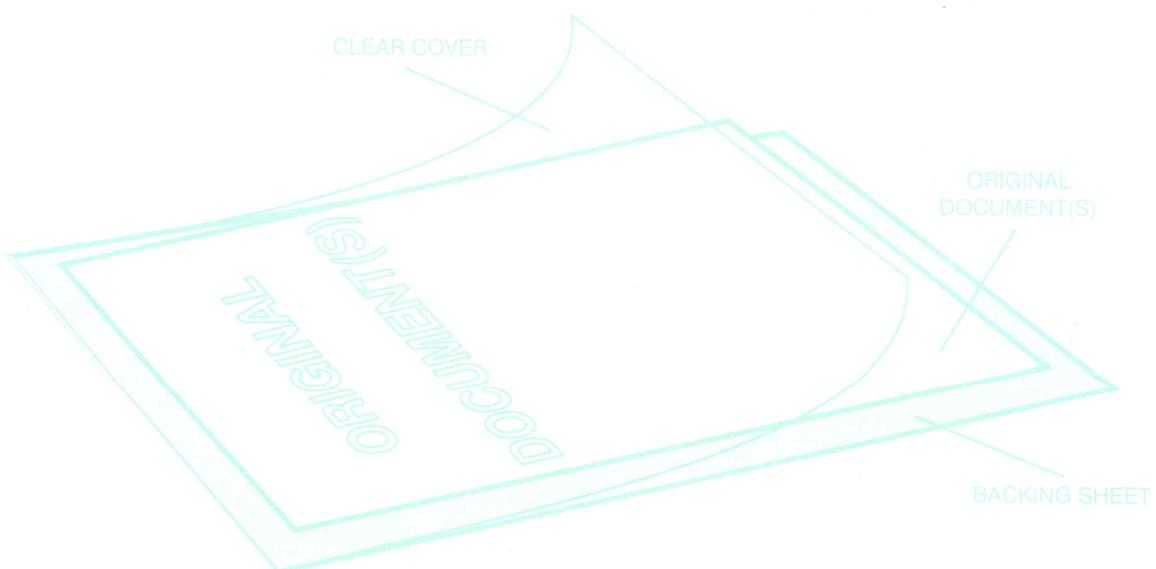
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ALVIN AILEY notes. at biltmore hotel, 7 march 89

memories of downtown l.a. in the late 1940s and early 1950s. when lester horton died in 1953, I became his company's director immediately. then in summer of 1954, ailey and carmen de lavallade went to new york to be in "House of Flowers."

at biltmore, saw danilova and katherine dunham. at philharmonic saw xx, xx and xx. saw billie holiday. at orpheum, tommy dorsey.

lester horton place at 7566 melrose avenue. people. did find room. painting.

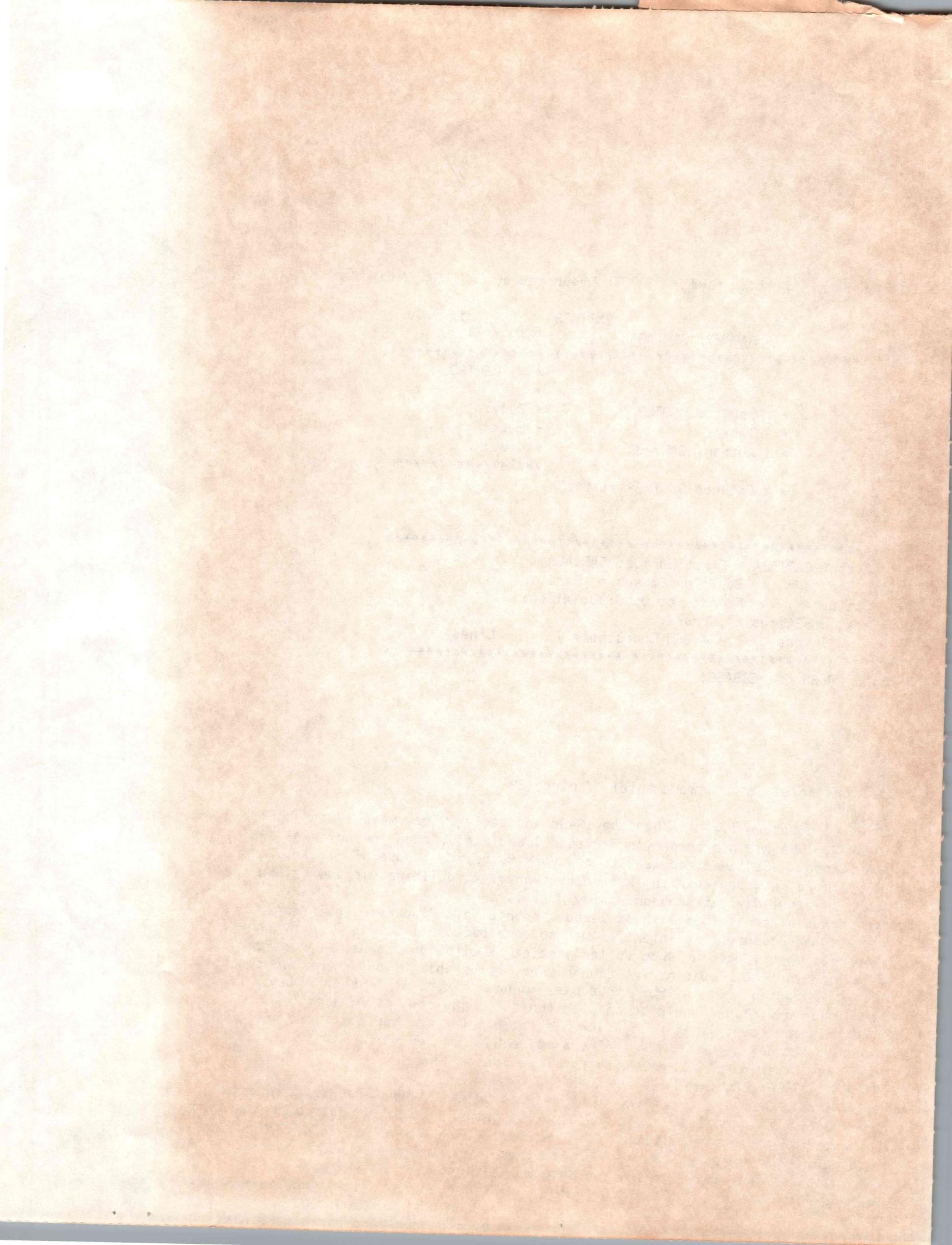
he designed costumes. my intention was to come back to l.a. was in many shows. showboat. when I was in show called Jamaica XX with lena horne and ricardo montalban in 1958, I was making enough money to be able to put on my own concert. one in 1958, then two in 1959. the pasy is now to keep it love to finance it.

little did I know that I would be chasing funds for the rest of my life. that home in the country. it will never happen. not for me, and not for them.

I like what I'm doing. 2000 kids in the ailey school in new york. whenever I get depressed, I think of all these things I've accomplished.

IF YOU DON'T TOUR, YOU CAN'T HAVE A COMPANY

dunham program: broke my heart not to be able to bring it here. for an additional \$25,000 from the local sponsor, could do it, though it really costs more than that the extra truck to carry scenery from the east coast would cost \$25,000 by itself. I first saw dunham here, at the biltmore theater. my board queasy about putting it on. and the costs just kept growing. we thought we could get the costumes out of a warehouse in east st. louis. ford foundation give \$100,000. other foundations gave money. the original cost was \$300,000, but ended up costing \$500,000. orchestrations had to be recorded for tour use. certain orchestra parts were missing



six drummers she insisted on. (and of course we never did it right according to dunham)

the worse thing was the stagehands. we had to double the number of stagehands because of the size and number of the sets. a big show like savon labe. platforms. double stagehands. another \$40,000.

city center. an extra truck to haul it.

st. louis. near her home. she is 80. her nephew Kay Dunham in l.a.

hard to raise money for revivals. very few people want to contribute. julie belafonte was in on this. Paris in october. a million costumes. of course my dream to keep it together.

dec. 87 premiere (in new york) spring 88 to kennedy center and boston. then to France. paris in oct. 88. in paris they loved it. we did Act I, which some people say is the best act. so many ruffles!

IT ALWAYS COMES BACK TO MONEY. annual deficit of \$750,000 (well, martha graham at 94 has a \$2 million deficit. on tour, we break even. UC Berkeley. I always wanted to go to Berkeley. I went to ucla. xxx my dancers. tuos canctrxx my doctors.

endless problems. this is a stress business. Minskoff building on 45th st. four studios and school, and administration offices. doing the government's work.

we go to europe once or twice a year. paris. palais des sports, a 5,000 arena.going back in july for the bicentennial of the revolution. they appreciate us.

Does the United States appreciate you? "Well, in the United States, we're still trying to build audiences. No, the U.S. doesn't appreciate us, enough.

more and more, we are appreciated. since the national endowment started in 1966., since the civil rights movement even earlier, that has grown our century.

there is still a Victorian attitude about the arts, about actors, about dancers.

miasma. bureaucrats. la scala. dancers want to dance, all around the world.

the time is short: they have only so many years when they can dance.

we keep our dancers on a 38-week contract. the knees go, the hip joints go.

martha graham this 94 year old genius. still making dances. with a \$2 million deficit.

frustrated as a choreographer because our schedule permits, because of funding, only one rehearsal period a year. even working as hard as one can, it is possible to create no more than two new works a season.

"survivors" 1986 about the mandelas. who can tell what the truth is? .

italian tv production of four works, on which we danced survivors at The Tombs in NYC one of the things we do is make a social statement. Blues Suite is a social statement those people down in the dirt. revelations 1960. our black heritage.

the line of black choreographers, from katherine dunham to pearl primus to donald mackayle to talley beaty. that line.

except for France. merce cunningham co. appreciated in france.

kenedy center honors.

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"Dancing for television is marvelous.....
the audience gets a chance to see you sweat."

JUDITH JAMISON

TALKS DURING REHEARSAL FOR

"ALVIN AILEY: MEMORIES AND VISIONS!"

A PBS SPECIAL OF THE WEEK

AIRING MONDAY, MAY 6 AT 8:00 P.M.

-- by Blanche Feldstein

"I'll stay here, fall asleep on my three chairs, wake up in an hour -- feeling evil -- then I'll go on stage and forget everything."

So said Judith Jamison as she sat wearily on the stoop of a staircase behind the rehearsal hall in the New York City Center. She had just finished rehearsing the duet "Love" with John Parks, a male-female contretemps, from Alvin Ailey's "Hidden Rites." It was during a pretaping rehearsal for WNET/13's SOUL! production, "Alvin Ailey: Memories and Visions," which will be aired on the Public Broadcasting Service on May 6 at 8:00 p.m.*

Miss Jamison and her partner had danced the piece twice and then walked through it several times for director Stan Lathan and the lighting and camera men as they made judgements on how best to set the cameras to capture the piece's life on the television screen.

How does she feel about appearing in a television production? "I think dancing for television is marvelous -- I wish there were more of it," she said. Then, she added, "The audience gets a chance to see you sweat -- it takes some of the glamour out of it."

- m o r e -

*Please check your local PBS station for area broadcast time.

Stretching her legs out full length (she's almost six feet tall) and allowing herself to relax the best way she could against the stairs, she admitted that it was a bit difficult keeping up with an extremely heavy dance schedule of performances almost every night, and four times over the weekend, in addition to the afternoon rehearsals and taping for the television show.

"I haven't had a vacation for over two years," she confided. "I have to laugh when someone asks me, what else do you do besides dance -- as though it were an avocation. My whole life is devoted to it."

"I would go home for a couple of hours, but the traffic is too much, so I just sleep for a while on three chairs I put together until it's time to get ready for the performance," she explained.

She had taken off her slippers during the dance for easier movement, and a little self-conscious about her bare feet, she said, "My feet are raw. Like most dancers, I'll keep going until I succumb to injuries -- it's like a Mexican standoff."

She laughed, with a note of resignation in her voice. "Right now, I guess I should be in the hospital in traction -- my fifth and sixth cervical bones are out of place -- but I don't have time to take care of it."

How does she manage a home life in the midst of such a heavy schedule?

Her face lit up as she talked about her husband. "Miguel (Godreau) understands since he is also a dancer and just as busy."

"He used to be with the Alvin Ailey dancers -- that's where we met in 1965 when I joined the company. Then, on December 17, 1972, Miguel decided we should get married -- just like that -- bang," she said laughing. Her remarkable large black eyes glowed and her weariness seemed to disappear as she spoke animatedly.

"He's an incredible dancer -- one of a kind -- really the thing!"

"After getting married, I didn't see him for six months -- until I went to London where he was dancing. We're together in New York now. He teaches at Pace University and is performing with Bernice Johnson's company at Alice Tulley Hall and also teaches dance at Alvin Ailey's school."

"It seems we've both been so busy during the past two years -- and we're still hoping to have a vacation someday -- with nothing in the near future possible," she said wistfully, her fatigue visibly returning.

A full schedule of dance was ahead of her. At the time of the taping for the television show, they were about to leave on their Paris tour where they danced for five weeks at the "Palais de Sport." The company completed a tour of the United States cities and is now at the New York City Center rehearsing for a spring opening.

As I started to leave, Miss Jamison shook my hand and said "I wouldn't be banging in here if I didn't love it, you know. You just keep going -- or you give it up."

That night, after the performance of "Revelations," I rose to my feet with the rest of the audience in a standing ovation. It was hard to believe that the Judith Jamison on stage was the tired young woman of this afternoon.

The applause would not stop. Then, suddenly with a regal gesture, Miss Jamison signalled the company to return to their dancing positions -- and they repeated the entire last part of "Revelations" with a tremendous burst of renewed energy.

Judith Jamison had awakened from those three hard chairs feeling "evil" and had on stage "forgotten everything," creating a performance not easily forgotten by those of us who saw her that night.

Her words of that afternoon seemed to echo through City Center as the audience streamed out, exhilarated by the performance. "People see the finished result -- it doesn't matter what you went through -- as long as you produce."

April, 1974

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PRESS RELEASE

WNET/13
304 WEST 58 ST.
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STAN LATHAN DIRECTS

ALVIN AILEY: MEMORIES AND VISIONS

Stan Lathan, the director of the feature musical documentary, "Save the Children" and a soon to be released feature comedy film called "Amazing Grace," starring Moms Mabley, is the director for the hour-long production of "Alvin Ailey: Memories and Visions." (A "Special of the Week" to be aired nationally over the Public Broadcasting Service on May 6 at 8:00 p.m.*)

Formerly a producer and director on WNET/13's "Black Journal," he was also a director of the SOUL! series. He had directed a number of dance segments for SOUL! but this is his first dance special.

"Directing dance for television is not magic -- it's an attempt to capture and photograph movement," Lathan says. "But it is a big challenge, especially when you have a lot of dancers to deal with. I was fortunate to work with some of the finest dancers in the world and a brilliant choreographer."

This color television special on Alvin Ailey's dance works may seem like magic, however, to viewers. Lathan attributes much of the beauty of the production to his working closely with choreographer Ailey to adapt and re-stage numbers so that no sacrifice of the original intent or artistic rendering of the pieces occurred as they were transformed from stage to television.

Immediately following the completion of the Ailey special, Lathan left for California where as a free-lance artist he directed a number of segments of "Sanford and Son," NBC's weekly series. He had been director of SOUL! for the past two seasons and had previously directed the Children's Television Workshop's renowned chil-

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*Please check your local PBS station for area broadcast time.

dren's program, "Sesame Street" for a season and a half, and still maintains his affiliation with the program.

As producer and director for WNET/13's "Black Journal," which he joined in October, 1969, Lathan thrived on a varied program diet. He produced and directed three films on location in Trinidad and one in Guyana, South America, dealing with culture, music and the theater. One of his films for the series, entitled "And We Still Survive," recaptured the political mood of the 1960's. Another "It's Nation Time," reported on the Congress of African Peoples held in Atlanta in 1970. Lathan also did an entire program on the Black woman and another focusing on an embattled Illinois community, "War in Cairo." He produced a special hour-long edition for "Black Journal" entitled "Justice?" filmed in San Quentin and Soledad prisons, which dealt with the need for prison reform and the case of Angela Davis.

Lathan was a director at a theater workshop in Boston following his graduation from Penn State University in 1967. He was on the staff of WGBH-TV, Boston, as director of the "Say Brother" series, before joining "Black Journal." He was also involved in Harlem's Black Theater Workshop, under the direction of playwright Ed Bullins and taught a course in television directing at Howard University.

Writer: B.F.

April, 1974

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE ALVIN AILEY CITY CENTER DANCE THEATER

The WNET/13 production of ALVIN AILEY: MEMORIES AND VISIONS to be aired as a Public Broadcasting Service "Special of the Week" on Monday, May 6 at 8:00 p.m.* is dedicated to Alvin Ailey's dance works as they are performed by the Alvin Ailey City Center Dance Theater.

The company, originally known as the Alvin Ailey American Dance Company, was founded in 1958. Since that time, it has received international recognition. In the past three years Ailey has choreographed nine new works for his company; one work for the City Center Joffrey Ballet, and two for American Ballet Theater.

Ailey also staged FOUR SAINTS IN THREE ACTS for the Piccolo Met (or Mini-Metropolitan Opera). Among his other more recent ventures have been creating the choreography for CARMEN which opened the Metropolitan Opera's 88th season; and choreography and collaborating on the musical staging of Leonard Bernstein's MASS, which officially opened the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

Following the engagement of the MASS the Alvin Ailey City Center Dance Theater played its own engagement at the Kennedy Center Opera House. Ailey again participated in preparing the MASS for its second Washington engagement at the Kennedy Center and for its first performance at Philadelphia's Academy of Music and the Metropolitan Opera in New York. Ailey was given the honor of choreographing Samuel Barber's ANTHONY AND CLEOPATRA, which opened the new Metropolitan Opera House in Lincoln Center. He also staged a full length ballet for the world premiere of Virgil Thomson's opera LORD BYRON.

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*Please check your local PBS station for area broadcast time.

Its international tours have taken his company to six continents and to virtually every European country, including a record breaking tour of the Soviet Union (the first by an American contemporary dance company). During summer, 1973 the company played three weeks at Sadler's Wells Theater and then toured the Mid-East.

The company will open their spring 1974 season at the New York City Center on May 14 after having completed a month-long engagement at the Palais des Sports in Paris and a tour across the United States.

In the United States, in addition to its regular tours, the company has engaged in an educational program involving university residencies under the auspices of the National Endowment for the Arts. The company, City Center's most recent constituent, has opened its official school, The American Dance Center. Because of Mr. Ailey's contributions to the American Theater he has received honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degrees from Princeton University and Cedar Crest College.

Writer: B.F.

April, 1974

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192) to be considered as separate roads. The roads are
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PRESS RELEASE

WNET/13
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

"ALVIN AILEY: MEMORIES AND VISIONS."

PRODUCED BY WNET/13'S "SOUL!"

WILL BE SPECIAL OF THE WEEK

ON MAY 6 AT 8:00 P.M.

"The major influences in my work are my black roots... 'blood' memories of my Texas childhood...the honky tonks, the field, relatives and friends, the men, the women, the Gospel Church, the blues ...and a very strong desire to express myself."

Thus, Alvin Ailey, choreographer, introduces himself and his works as they are performed by members of his City Center Dance Theater in the hour-long Special of the Week, "Alvin Ailey: Memories and Visions." The WNET/13 SOUL! production will be broadcast nationally over the Public Broadcasting Service and in New York on WNET/13 as Special of the Week on May 6 at 8:00 p.m.* The production is made possible in part by grants from The Corporation for Public Broadcasting and The National Endowment for the Arts.

The color telecast features excerpts from Ailey's major works, which vividly portray the varied influences in his life, and celebrates his rendering of these influences into works of art. The works range from dances choreographed to modern blues in "Blues Suite," to the classical music of Ralph Vaughan Williams in "The Lark Ascending," to the traditional spirituals in "Revelations."

Two love duets--to be seen on television for the first time--excerpted from "Hidden Rites," stem, Ailey says, from his fascination with the "battle of

-more-

*Please check your local PBS station on area broadcast time.

the sexes." The exciting duets are danced by world--renowned Judith Jamison and John Parks, and by Tina Yuan and Clive Thompson. The dances are accompanied by music from "Cyclopes" by Patrice Sciortino and can be compared with the mating rites of exotic birds.

Director of the program is Stan Lathan, who has directed many SOUL! productions. Lathan and Ailey cooperated in transposing the dances from their original stage format to a form suitable for television. Special camera "effects" are sparingly used, only to enhance the naturalness and purity of the dances. The excitement of Judith Jamison dancing her solo "Cry," for example, is heightened through the television camera's ability to capture her most subtle movements and facial expressions.

Ailey re-choreographed some of the dances so that their movement and flow could be adequately rendered, without sacrifice of beauty, within the confines of the television screen. A dance critic describes the Ailey company as made up of "tall, strong dancers who challenge gravity and the dimensions of the stage." In this production, through a partnership between director and choreographer, the Ailey dancers leap full-blown onto the television screen which seems to expand to accommodate them.

ALVIN AILEY: MEMORIES AND VISIONS, is a production of WNET/13 transmitted nationally as a Special of the Week by PBS, the Public Broadcasting Service. The program is made possible in part by grants from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the National Endowments for the Arts.

Writer: B.F.

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CREDIT SHEET

Following are cast and production credits for WNET/13's SOUL! production of ALVIN AILEY: MEMORIES AND VISIONS, airing as the PBS "Special of the Week," Monday, May 6 at 8:00 p.m.*, made possible in part by grants from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Produced by: Ellis Haizlip and Alonzo Brown, Jr.

Directed by: Stan Lathan

Choreography by: Alvin Ailey

Nerissa Barnes
Masazumi Chaya
Ulysses Dove
Melvin Jones
Judith Jamison
Mari Kajiwara
Linda Kent
Edward Love
Hector Mercado
Christa Mueller
Michihiko Oka
John Parks

Kenneth Pearl
Kelvin Rotardier
Dana Sapiro
Estelle Spurlock
Clive Thompson
Sylvia Waters
Elbert Watson
Dudley Williams
Donna Wood
Peter Woodin
Sara Yarborough
Tina Yuan

Set Design by:

Robert Wightman

Lighting Consultant:

Michael L. Mannes

Associate Producer:

Anna M. Horsford

Production Manager:

Douglas Lutz

Assistant to Director:

Merrily Mossman

Assistant to Producers:

Kenneth R. Reynolds

Engineering Supervision:

Wayne Grennier

Audio Supervision:

Lou Bruno

Music Supervision:

John Adams

Videotape Editor:

Juan Barnett

Manager of Production Operations:

Herb Homes

Graphic Design Supervision:

Bill Mandel

Announcer:

Anna M. Horsford

Executive producer:

Jac Venza, Director of Performance Programs,

WNET/13

- m o r e -

*Please check your local PBS station for area broadcast time.

PERFORMED BY ALVIN AILEY CITY CENTER DANCE THEATER

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Artistic Director: | Alvin Ailey |
| Ballet Master: | Ali Pourfarrokh |
| Managing Director: | Ivy Clarke |
| Assistant Ballet Master: | Dudley Williams |
| Musical Director: | Howard A. Roberts |

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ALVIN AILEY: MEMORIES AND VISIONS

SPECIAL OF THE WEEK ON PBS
MONDAY, MAY 6, 1974

CONTACT:

Angela Solomon
WNET/13
304 West 58th Street
New York, New York
(212) 262-8256

Made possible in part
by grants from The
Corporation for Public
Broadcasting and the
National Endowment
for the Arts

THE DANCES

Choreography by Alvin Ailey

Excerpts from BLUES SUITE

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| "Good Morning Blues"..... | Alvin Ailey and company |
| "I Cried"..... | Kelvin Rotardier and
company |
| "House of the Rising Sun"..... | Estelle Spurlock,
Linda Kent and Donna Wood |

Music arranged and sung by Brother John Sellers

Excerpts from THE LARK ASCENDING

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Solo..... | Sara Yarborough |
| "Pas de deux"..... | Sara Yarborough and
Clive Thompson |

Music by Ralph Vaughan Williams
Violin solo by Gerald Tarack

Excerpts from MARY LOU'S MASS

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| "The Old Time Spiritual"..... | Clive Thompson and
company |
| "The Lord Says"..... | Judith Jamison, Clive
Thompson and company |
| "The Act of Contrition"..... | Dudley Williams, Linda
Kent and company |
| "Lazarus"..... | Dudley Williams, Clive
Thompson and John Parks |

Music by Mary Lou Williams
Soloists: Mary Lou Williams, piano
Carline Ray
Hon Gordon
Milton Grayson
The Howard Roberts Chorale

CRY performed by Judith Jamison

Music "Right On, Be Free" by Chuck Griffin
Sung by The Voices Of East Harlem

A SONG FOR YOU performed by Dudley Williams

Words and Music by Leon Russell
Sung by Donny Hathaway

Excerpts from HIDDEN RITES

"Of Love"

First duet performed by Judith Jamison and John Parks
Second duet performed by Tina Yuan and Clive Thompson

Music: "Cyclopes" by Patrice Sciortino

Excerpts from REVELATIONS

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| "Processional"..... | Judith Jamison and company |
| "Honor, Honor"..... | Judith Jamison, Kelvin
Rotardier, Sylvia Waters and
company |
| "The Day is Past and Gone"..... | Women of the company |
| "Run Home"..... | The company |
| "Rocka my Soul in the Bosom
of Abraham"..... | The company |

Music: "Revelations" arranged by Howard A. Roberts

Soloists: Brother John Sellers
Ella Mitchell
Leon Bibb
The Howard Roberts Chorale